

worthy of our endeavours to counteract their influence. To your tents, then, O Israel! FRATER.

### CHRIST IS LORD BOTH OF THE DEAD AND THE LIVING.

MR. EDITOR—A "Student of Prophecy," in his criticism upon Dr. Thomas, in your last number, "trusts" that the salvation of those who die in infancy, may be made out from the Scriptures "inferentially." Undoubtedly it may be so made out. But it must be borne in mind, that the "Christian System" is a remedial system, and contemplates the bringing back to God, those who had wandered away from him; and we may aver therefore that *infants* as such, are not amenable to the penalty for *rejecting* the gospel, nor are they entitled to its rewards, for they are incapable of good or evil; and I think we may aver this as well, as that Scripture says neither *yea* or *noy* in the matter, without having such gloomy ideas attending the conviction, as the "Student" would entertain. I earnestly request his attention to the following statements and remarks. "Jesus Christ came into the world to save *sinners*." "He came, not to call the righteous, but *sinners* to repentance." He came to shew a way to God, for those who had departed from him. "I am the way, the truth," &c. The man to whom the "glad tidings" never came, cannot be subject either to its rewards or punishment. The man to whom the option of "life" or "death" has never been presented, cannot *justly* be amenable to punishment for not having *life*. Thus, *infants*, as such, are not subject to the "Christian System," never having done evil; yet, coming into the world under a sentence of death, which came upon them "by Adam," they die. But this does not necessitate their absolute extinction, by any means—for "Jesus Christ is *lord* both of the dead and *living*." The Apostle says, "to this end Christ both died and revived, that he might be *Lord* both of the dead and the living." And when the earth and the sea and hades, shall have given up the dead in them, and they are judged according to their works, how can they be *condemned* who have done no evil?

This question is one that has arisen in consequence of ignorant teachers applying the ordinance of baptism (belonging to the *penitent believer* only) to an unconscious infant, who, in its state of ignorance of good and evil, is unaccountable, and consequently not a subject of the remedial system of the gospel; and if these teachers had not made it out, that *infants*, incapable of *faith*, were saved by a mode that *required faith*, neither Dr. Thomas, nor any one else, would have needed to speak of them; nor do I think the Dr. would attempt to set bounds to either the power or the mercy of God.

For myself, believing God to be of "infinite mercy," and that he has created *nothing* in *vain*, I also believe *he will*, by means *unknown* to us, save *all* who have never refused to be saved.

J. W. SYMONDS.

### CRITICISM UPON DR. THOMAS CRITICISED.

"Ye judge after the flesh"—"the flesh profiteth nothing." JESUS.

MR. BANNER, Dear Sir,—In your October number, just come to hand, is an article by a "Student of Prophecy," entitled, "Criticism upon Dr. Thomas." It refers to doctrine propounded in my recent pamphlet styled, "*The Wisdom of the Clergy proved to be Folly*." I wish the worthy critic had criticised the arguments and testimonies so abundantly adduced in the pamphlet, rather than myself. My "coolness," and "very stoical constitution of mind;" the impressions made upon his mind by the gloominess and heartlessness of the *inferences* he draws from the doctrine presented; and the faggotty imbecility of "right-hearted (!) men" of the flesh, who would make a bonfire of all the Bibles they

could collect if they found taught there a doctrine which was not palatable to their fleshy reason—has nothing at all to do with the testimony adduced, and the ungarbled interpretation thereof. Let the pamphlet be tried, not according to fleshy feeling, or the bias of education, but according to the grammatical import of "the Law and the Testimony," as any other offender is tried by the laws of the country, and by the evidence in the case, and I hesitate not to say that a verdict will be given in its favour. But on the other hand, if it be judged under the dictation of the blind and fleshy organ of philoprogenitiveness, especially if the *adjudicating* body be constituted of the softer sex, of men of feminine organization of brain, and of clergy, to whose monopoly infantism pertains, the pamphlet in question will undoubtedly be condemned, and pronounced worthy of combustion by the common hangman, whose function it used to be to make practical the decrees of "orthodoxy" (which has been always shocked at the plain ungarbled truth) against "the heretics."

Allow me to remark that not belonging to the Baptist, or any other "denomination," what I have taught and published is imputable only to me. I am responsible for it all, be it good, bad, or indifferent in the estimation of the reader. The Baptist denomination has long since ceased to be a witness for "the truth." It has been flattered into silence by its enemies, who now enjoin it that it may hold its peace. While *immersion* is the only action of *baptism*, (which is tantamount to saying that *immersion is immersion*) "the truth" is something vastly more than immersion, or immersion for remission of sins. I have abundantly proved this in *Ætius Israel*, and the pamphlet, which no paper, that I am aware of, has as yet ventured to review. It would therefore be a work of supererogation for me to reproduce the proof at the present time.

"He that believes the gospel and is immersed shall be saved; he that believes not shall be condemned." "Except a man be *born out of water* (*εξ υδατος*) and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God." These are "the wholesome words of the Lord Jesus;" few believe them, but nevertheless they are true and imperative as when first spoken, and that too in all their inferential "gloominess" and "heartlessness" to my critic's "right-hearted men" of bonfire celebrity.

The critic *feels* it to be a dishonour done to the religion of Jesus Christ to affirm in the view of the wholesome words of the Lord, that animal infants return to the dust from which their original ancestor came, and there remain. This is a matter of *feeling* with him. But "the feelings are blind;" they are unreasoning, and cannot be argued with. You cannot reason with a person "in love;" nor with a father or mother who permit philoprogenitiveness to lord it over causality, comparison, and the perceptive and moral faculties. If Critic have children he doubtless believes that *his* bairns will be glorified, whatever becomes of the "non-elect;" but does he *feel* it no dishonour to religion, &c., when creeds and parsons teach the eternal torment of babes who are not sprinkled, or subjected to their nonsensical legerdemain! Let his zeal awake against this monstrous, gloomy, and heartless dogma, rather than "strain at a gnat and swallow such a camel" as his remarks on me.

Our Lord blessed little children on the same principle that the chief Rabbi of the Jews blesses them at this day, not for their salvation, but because the less is blessed of the greater. "The angel who redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads;" said Jacob: "and let my name be named on them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth." And it has been so. Does "a blessing," then, necessarily imply resurrection from the dead to inherit the kingdom of God? By no means.

My critic's appeal "to the heart of every Christian" is only begging the question. As in the days of Noah, so now, "the whole *imagination* of the thoughts of" professors' "hearts is only evil continually." They have set up

and perpetuated a Christianity which is only to be found in the Bible as apostasy in faith and practice from the "sound doctrine" of Christ and his Apostles. The modern Christian heart is not the standard of truth and error. What revolts it is more likely to be true than what pleases it. It is crooked and perverse, and requires to be converted by the testimony of God.

The believer's faith rests not upon inferences, but upon testimony affirmed. Having learned *what is*, he knows intuitively, if I may so speak, *what is not*, thus and so much be believed and practiced for salvation, he needs not to be told that not to do is to be condemned. If I say a thing is square, I need not say that it is not round, or triangular; the not being round or triangular implied in the affirmation that it is square. God's word instructs by affirmatives, not by negatives. Men sermonize by telling their hearers what a thing is not, and after all leave them to conjecture what it is. This is not the practice of the Holy Spirit, nor is it the rule by which I work; and therefore my "frank and open development of doctrine," of which my critic speaks.

The destiny of infants, now making such a noise in the State-Church, has nothing to do with Christianity. It is a question of the apostasy. The *essence* of Christianity, or the doctrine of Jesus, is "the kingdom of God," without which there is neither gospel nor King. "A Student of Prophecy" had better look to this; for unless he believe in this kingdom, which is the subject of the gospel, and be baptized, he cannot possibly enter or possess it.

What an abuse of words it is to talk about "annihilation," in relation to those who are to rise again! When they die their being is only *suspended*, not annihilated. Let not your readers be children, but full grown men in understanding.

Certain words of awful sound are often used by a certain class of specious pleaders, who can do more with full orb'd words than *testimony*, to perpetuate dogmas which while they comfort the fleshly feelings, nullify both Scripture and reason. Let those who undertake to review "the Doctor's system," as it is called, study *Elpis Israel* and the pamphlet with the Scriptures by their side. Let them not be like Mr. Campbell, presume to say what I teach without having read my works. We must have Scripture testimony and reason not words, a mere sounds signify nothing.

Let my reviewers be quite sure they understand the Apocalypse before they criticize my interpretation of it, which they have not seen, for it exists not in this country. Let them quote the words accurately, which the writer before me does not. It does not say in Rev. v. 9, that "the spirits of the redeemed" say so and so. This is a *version*, not a quotation of the text. The song is put into the mouths of *symbolic* beasts and elders, and they say, "We shall reign on the earth;" it is only my critic's opinion that they represent spirits in an intermediate state. Enoch and Elijah were John's fellow servants, and of his brethren the prophets. They did not die. There was no separation of body and spirit in their case. The passage therefore proves nothing in the case.

Trusting, with my critic, that all "averments" not fully sustained by Scripture and reason (which are inseparable) will be "fully exposed;" and thanking him for his well-meant attempt to expose me and mine, I beg to conclude by subscribing myself,  
 Your's faithfully,  
 JOHN THOMAS.

#### MATERIALISM.

MR. EDITOR,—*Dear Brother*.—In an Editorial note to the criticism of the "Student of Prophecy," for this month, I found a remark which calls for some notice from me. You brand me as a Materialist: though "hard names break no bones," yet it is not necessary to nail false colours to an opponent's mast.